

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 3
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Albert Werthan of
Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Albert Werthan, a prominent retired Nashville businessman and civic leader; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Werthan was exemplary in his commitment to public service and worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; the patriarch of the Werthan family, he was also a respected leader within the Nashville community; and

WHEREAS, born in 1905 in St. Louis, the son of Morris and May Moses Werthan, Albert Werthan came to Nashville in his teens and was educated at the old Wallace University School; he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business in 1928; and

WHEREAS, Morris and his brother, Joe, came to work in their father Meier Werthan's business in 1895; Meier had immigrated to this country in the mid 1800's, going first to Cincinnati and by 1868 establishing himself in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Meier started out dealing in "feathers, wool and ginseng", then second hand furniture, then hides and furs, and then junk; when his sons came into the business after Meier's partner died, the business became Werthan and Company, and in the next decade the firm was renamed Werthan Bag and Burlap; and

WHEREAS, Werthan Bag prospered, and when Meier died in 1922, Morris returned from St. Louis, where he had set up a branch of the family business; his sons Bernard and Albert came into the business in the 1920's - Bernard in manufacturing and Albert in sales. When Morris died in 1931, Albert and Bernard ran the business with their Uncle Joe; and

WHEREAS, after a long run of success with textile bags, changes in technology indicated a need to diversify, and so Albert, with the assistance of his son-in-law, Herbert M. Shayne, a Harvard Business School graduate, moved the family business into the additional businesses of check printing and for a time, auto parts and computer software; in 1977 Albert retired, passing direction of the family business to the fourth generation, though he maintained an office, and having served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Werthan Industries, he followed the business for two more decades; and

WHEREAS, widely respected for his business acumen, Mr. Werthan served on the boards of Commerce Union Bank (now Bank of America), Nelson Capital Corporation, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, the Textile Bag Manufacturers Association, and the Paper Shipping Sack Manufacturers Association; his many and varied civic interests included serving as president of the Nashville Symphony Association, president of Cheekwood Botanical Gardens and Fine Arts Center, and as an emeritus trustee of Fisk University; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Werthan was an active and devout member of The Temple Congregation Ohabai Sholom, which he served faithfully for many years as president of both the congregation and the Temple Brotherhood; he also served as president of the Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Community Council; and

WHEREAS, fully involved in his community, Albert Werthan was a former member of the Nashville City Club, the Stadium Club, the Woodmont Country Club and the Shamus Club; he also belonged to the Cumberland Club and the University Club; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Mr. Werthan had received many awards, including an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Fisk University, selection as the Jaycees Man of the Year, the 1989 National Conference of Christians and Jews honoree, and the 1991 recipient of the Junior Achievement Free Enterprise Award, among others; and

WHEREAS, Albert Werthan was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Werthan enjoyed the loving companionship of the late Mary Jane Lowenheim Werthan, his wife of 68 years; Mary Jane Werthan was a 1929 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Vanderbilt who served the University as the first woman member of its Board of

Trust, as an officer of the Vanderbilt Aid Society and in many other capacities. She, like her husband, was a prominent figure in many civic activities and received numerous honors and accolades for her contributions over the years; and

WHEREAS, Albert and Mary Jane Werthan were the proud parents of Elizabeth Werthan and her husband Robert Brand, and the late May Werthan Shayne and her husband Herbert M. Shayne; they are sorely missed by five grandchildren and ten great grandchildren as well as Mr. Werthan's six nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, though seen by others primarily as an accomplished business executive, civic leader, and an active member of his religious community, Albert Werthan was also an extremely outgoing and charming person possessed of a great sense of humor; an entertaining pianist, he charmed family and friends by playing many selections from the canon of popular American songs he had learned during his long life, including those he played at college. He remained mentally alert and active seeing friends to the end of his days; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Werthan leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional businessman, civic leader, public servant, family patriarch and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Albert Werthan, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Werthan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.